

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEIBASSY MANAGUA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6144

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAGUA 0440

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PORS, NU

SUBJECT: FRENTE SANDINISTAS PRESS CONFERENCE IN HAVANA

1. THE DCM VISITED THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR ON JANUARY 28 AT THE AMBASSADOR'S REQUEST. THE AMBASSADOR READ TO THE DCM A REPORT FROM THE FRENCH EMBASSY AT HAVANA COVERING THE PRESS CONFERENCE HELD AT THE CIRO GARCIA HOSPITAL ON JANUARY 2, 1975. VARIOUS MEMBERS OF THE FRENTE, INCLUDING "MARCOS", WERE INTERVIEWED BY MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN PRESS STATIONED IN HAVANA. A TRANSCRIPT OF THE PRESS CONFERENCE WAS GIVEN TO THE FRENCH EMBASSY BY A CORRESPONDENT WHO HAD ATTENDED.

2. MUCH OF THE INTERVIEW REPEATED CHARGES OF NICARAGUAN GOVERNMENT REPRESSION OF CAMPESINOS, ESPECIALLY IN THE MATAGALPA AREA. THE FRENTE MEMBERS ALSO CLAIMED THAT NICARAGUAN GOVERNMENT ORGANS ENGAGED IN TORTURE COUNTING ON THE SUPPORT OF NORTH AMERICANS AND BRAZILIANS AND THAT A SON OF PRESIDENT SOMOZA AND FORMER PUBLIC SAFETY ADVISOR GUNTHER WAGNER, NOW UNDER PRIVATE CONTRACT TO THE NICARAGUAN GOVERNMENT, PARTICIPATED PERSONALLY IN ACTS OF TORTURE. MARCOS ALSO SAID THAT THE WORKERS AND PEASANTS ARE THE FLESH AND BLOOD OF THE FRENTE AND THAT THE FRENTE ALSO INTENDS TO ISOLATE THE OFFICIAL BOURGEOISE AND REGROUP ALL PROGRESSIVE FORCES, RELIGIOUS, LABOR, ETC. TO CREATE CONDITIONS FOR CHANGE IN THE COUNTRY. MARCOS ADDED "OUR ESSENTIAL TASK IS TO COORDINATE

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CLANDESTINE WORK AND TO PROMOTE MASS ORGANIZATION TO GIVE THE

DECISIVE BLOW TO THE DICTATORSHIP.

3. OF MOST INTEREST TO THE DEPARTMENT MAY BE THREE COMMENTS MADE BY THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR IN HAVANA: (1) THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THE TERRORISTS ARE BEING GIVEN VERY VERY GOOD TREATMENT IN THE HOTEL NACIONAL AND THAT THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT WISHES TO SHOW THAT IT GIVES AID TO THE GUERRILLAS OF ANY COUNTRY WHO STRUGGLE AGAINST WHAT THE CUBANS CONSIDER A CORRUPT GOVERNMENT.

(2) A CUBAN OFFICIAL, WHO IS A FRENCH EMBASSY SOURCE REPORTEDLY, SAID THE GUERRILLAS WILL "STAY FOR A WHILE IN CIBA" LEADING THE FRENCH EMBASSY TO BELIEVE THEY WILL LATER RETURN TO NICARAGUA.

(3) THE SAME SOURCE REPEATED A COMMENT THAT THE FRENCH EMBASSY HAD REPORTED EARLIER TO PARIS TO THE EFFECT THAT FIDEL CASTRO DOES NOT LIKE THE ACTIONS OF THE MONTENEGROS OR THE PEOPLES' REVOLUTIONARY ARMY IN ARGENTINA BECAUSE THEY MIGHT WELL BRING ABOUT A MILITARY GOVERNMENT SUCH AS THAT IN CHILE.

4. ON A SOMEWHAT LIGHTER SIDE THE CORRESPONDENT SAID THAT ONE FOREIGN JOURNALIST ASKED MARCOS IF THE FRENTE HAD COMMUNISTS IN ITS MEMBERSHIP. MARCOS EXCLAIMED "NO WE ARE NOT COMMUNISTS". COMMUNIST JOURNALISTS PRESENT COULD NOT HIDE THEIR SURPRISE AT THIS STATEMENT. HUNGARIAN CORRESPONDENT FERENC KIRALY, SAID "WELL THEN YOU ARE JUST TERRORISTS". AT WHICH POINT A RUSSIAN REPORTER SHOUTED "NO THEY ARE PATRIOTS".
SHELTON

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